

March 26, 2009

Greg Barkus, Chair  
Senate Fish and Game Committee  
Montana State Senate

Dear Senator Barkus and members of the Senate Fish and Game Committee,

I ask for your confirmation of my nomination to the Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Commission. Senators Barkus and Brenden have served on this Commission and know the tremendous amount of work and dedication required to serve the state in that capacity. I participated in the February and March Commission meetings. I feel that I am eminently qualified for this position for the following three reasons:

First, I come from a long line of hunters and I'm an outdoor enthusiast. I grew up on a farm and understand the importance of sportsman-landowner relationships. As a kid, I beat the corn rows of southern Wisconsin for my parents and grandparents' pheasant hunting. Besides being a hunter, I've canoed many of Montana's rivers, climbed many of its peaks, and backpacked many of its trails. I've skied, sailed, scuba dived, rock climbed, hang glided, and piloted single engine aircraft.

Second, professionally I spent 34 years teaching and doing research in wildlife and natural resource management, 28 at UM's School of Forestry. I taught courses in big game management, habitat management, population modeling, conservation of natural resources, recreation river management, wilderness management, and basic ecology. I was instrumental in starting the interagency elk-logging studies in the early 70's in cooperation with the state, BLM, and US Forest Service. I was appointed to the Northern Rocky Mountain Wolf Recovery team in 1974, started the first studies of wolves in Montana in 1973, and the naturally recovering wolf population in the North Fork Flathead area in 1979. I worked with numerous graduate students on a variety of big game species.

Finally, I served in the Montana House of Representatives for 8 sessions, always on the Fish and Game Committee and twice chaired that committee. I was chief sponsor or co-sponsor of numerous wildlife and natural resource bills. I sponsored Montana's stream access law, restitution law providing compensation to the state for the illegal killing of wildlife, laws regulating the game farm industry, law controlling importing and introducing wildlife into the wild, fish and wildlife crime stoppers law, streamside management standards for timber harvest, hazardous waste laws and superfund laws. I have a good understanding of FWP statutes and a long history of involvement in their activities and policies.

Thank you for your consideration of my appointment.

Bob Ream



## **Resume – Bob Ream**

Bob Ream was born and raised on his grandparents' small farm in southern Wisconsin. His father worked for USDA Soil Conservation Service, in Wisconsin, Washington DC, and then for the State Department on international agricultural development in Southeast Asia as Bob was growing up. He attended the University of Wisconsin (BS and PhD) and University of Utah (MS), with degrees in agriculture and plant and animal ecology.

In his professional career Bob worked at the University of Denver for 3 years, worked in Forest Service Wilderness Research for 3 years, and then taught and did research at the University of Montana for 28 years. He conducted research on natural wolf recolonization in the northern Rocky Mountains, the cooperative elk-logging study, wilderness management, river recreation management, and published numerous papers, book chapters, and gave many professional presentations. His graduate students conducted studies on most of Montana's big game species. He taught classes in resource conservation, wildlife ecology and management, habitat management, wilderness management, and started the Wilderness Institute at the University of Montana. He sponsored numerous student field trips on the Rocky Mountain Front, Missouri River Breaks, and many other public lands in Montana. He also served as Acting Dean of the School of Forestry for 15 months in 1993-94.

Bob served in the Montana House of Representatives for 15 years, elected to this position eight times. He distinguished himself in the House as Chair of Fish and Game Committee and as a leader on taxation issues as member and vice-chair of House Taxation Committee. He sponsored bills for stream access, controlling importation of wildlife, wildlife crime stoppers, restitution for illegally killed wildlife, superfund, hazardous waste management, forest management in the streamside management zone, game farm management, and numerous other natural resource bills.

Bob retired from the University of Montana in 1997 and stepped down from his legislative position at the same time. Because of his background and training, Bob has considerable experience in natural resource issues - endangered species, wilderness allocation, national parks, forest and wildlife management, etc. He is familiar with state and federal natural resource agencies. His experience in politics enhances his professional background to provide a good balance of academics and practical application to natural resource management.

## WOLF WARS

THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE ENIGMATIC

by Hank Fischer

pairs of wolves (a breeding pair being the essential element of a pack) for each recovery area. The plan also proposed a system of controlling wolves based on dividing each recovery area into distinct zones of protection.

Despite these breakthroughs, the plan had two gaping holes: it permitted removing the wolf from the endangered species list when only two of the three recovery areas had met their goals, and it proposed only natural recovery, not reintroduction, for Yellowstone Park.

This time, conservationists hit the copy machines first and with even more zeal than Helle had in round one. We swamped the recovery team with letters and phone calls in which we insisted on a stronger plan. The team felt the pressure.

The decisive recovery team meeting took place in March 1984 in Missoula. The first issue was whether the plan would require wolf recovery in just two areas or all three. It didn't take a genius to know that Yellowstone Park would get dropped if it were only two. After all, it would be far simpler for wolves to colonize northwestern Montana and central Idaho, the two areas nearest existing Canadian wolf populations. Weaver saved the day by pointing out that the grizzly bear recovery plan called for restoration in a minimum of four areas. For consistency's sake, he reasoned, the Northern Rockies wolf recovery plan should include at least three areas. Team members concurred, and the change easily won approval.

The big debate concerned Yellowstone Park: to reintroduce or not to reintroduce, that was the question. The team had been heading toward this showdown for three years. Team leader Bart O'Gara led the way by casting his vote against Yellowstone Park reintroduction. He thought it controversial to the point of being unachievable. Ever sensible, he didn't want to pick a fight he couldn't win. O'Gara spoke from experience; for the past three years, he'd been the target of intensive sniping from the livestock industry.

Bob Ream stood up next. Everyone respected him as a wolf researcher and advocate. He wasn't one to sell the wolf short. But he,

too, opposed Yellowstone Park wolf reintroduction. He reasoned that, given enough time, wolves probably would return to the park on their own. It would be easier for people to accept their reappearance this way, he said. Besides, reintroduction—capturing wolves in Canada and shipping them in—would be expensive and time-consuming. It would make more sense, Ream said, to direct scarce government funds toward existing wolf recovery research and management in the Glacier Park area.

The room was quiet. Wolf advocates glanced nervously at one another. With two of the team's most influential members opposed to the idea, it seemed as if Yellowstone Park wolf reintroduction was about to get deep-sixed. Then Weaver took the floor. He argued that the scientific case for wolves' returning to Yellowstone Park without reintroduction was weak. Glacier Park is less than one hundred fifty miles from wolf populations in Canada, he said, yet it had taken more than twenty years for wolves to bridge that gap. He questioned the likelihood that wolves would move another three hundred miles farther south anytime in the foreseeable future.

*Individual* wolves might journey that far, he conceded. But the odds were extremely remote that two adult wolves of opposite sexes would travel that distance, find each other, mate, and successfully raise their pups. He argued that the team's proposal to restore wolves to all three areas wasn't biologically supportable unless it endorsed Yellowstone Park reintroduction.

Weaver was persuasive. Perhaps more important, the livestock industry's uncompromising attitude and Joe Helle's hardball politics had exasperated many recovery team members. Several members believed that recovery plans should be biological documents, not political ones. The final vote came down six to five in favor of Yellowstone Park reintroduction.

In October 1985, the team produced a final draft of the plan, recommending natural wolf recovery for northwestern Montana and central Idaho and reintroduction for Yellowstone Park. The recovery team also added one important new wrinkle: agencies would reintro-